Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content.

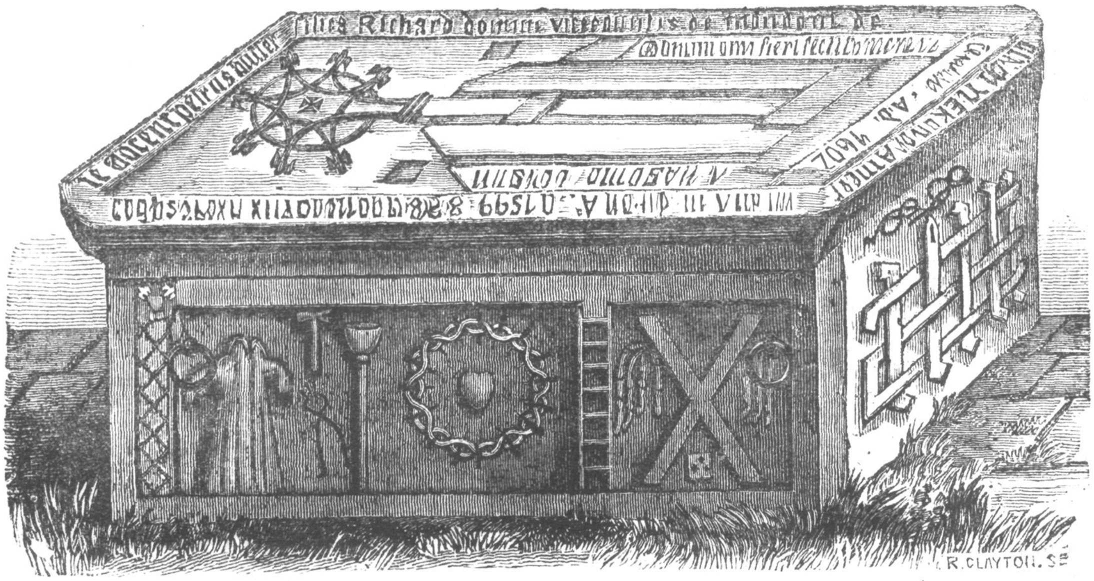
JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE

DUBLIN PENNY JOURNAL

CONDUCTED BY P. DIXON HARDY, M.R.I.A.

Vol. IV. MAY 14. 1836. No. 202.



TOMB OF PETER BUTLER IN ST. MARY'S ABBEY, NEW ROSS.*

This tomb lies in the north wing of the Abbey, attached to the wall; it is sculptured in relief, and is abundant in curious devices. The cross is ingeniously interlaced, as are some others in the neighbourhood. The following is the inscription in raised old English characters:—

" Hic jacent Petrus Butler filius Richard Domini Vicecomitis de Mountgarret quondam de Cloaghnekyragh Armiger† qui obiit 4 die Junii A. D. 1599, & Margareta Devereux uxor eius q hoc monumentu fieri fecit in mense Decembris A. D. 1602 & ex hoc seculo migravit."

New Ross. G. H.

THE STUDENT'S CABINET LIBRARY OF USEFUL TRACTS.‡

Several numbers of a little work bearing the above title, and at present in course of publication, have been forwarded to us. The tracts are on various subjects connected with science and natural philosophy. They are the productions of different individuals, and, as far as we have seen, are ably written. While, however, some of them are excellent, and contain much valuable information, others of them we would tremble to place in the hands of the youthful or inexperienced, as having a direct tendency to infidelity or scepticism. The writers evidently belong to the school of Mr. George Combe, of phrenological notoriety, in whose recent work on the "Constitution of Man," we may remark, *en passant*, there are passages which we esteem infinitely more dangerous than the wildest reveries of Deism.*

The following extract from the second number of the Student's Cabinet Library—which is an essay by Mr. Edw. Hitchcock, "on the Connexion between Geology and Natural Religion"—will afford a fair specimen of the style and manner in which the tract is written. As a whole, however, we cannot conscientiously recommend the publication, inasmuch as the sentiments and opinions contained in each tract must depend on the sentiments and opinions held by its author; and as some of those already published have evidently been written by sceptics or Unitarians, we must regard the work as a dangerous one to place in the hands of students or young persons.

"The progressive improvement which the state of the globe seems to have undergone in past ages, and is now undergoing, presents the plans of the Deity to our contemplation in an interesting light. In the earliest condition of the earth, the soils on its surface must have been meagre, and scarcely adapted to the support of vegetable life. But the processes of degradation, that have always been going on, and the accumulation of animal and vegetable matter, must improve their quality, and increase their quantity. It appears too that there has been a constant increase of limestone since the stratified rocks began to be deposited. Now the calcareous are the richest of all soils, and the most prolific in vegetation. From this cause, then, we see progressive fertility produced. Accordingly, there are some reasons for supposing that each successive creation of animals and vegetables has been more numerous than the one that preceded it; and we know that there has been a progression in the complication and curious structure of their natures.

---

* For some other monuments in this Abbey, see page 364.

† The word "Armiger" may be construed "gentleman," as well as soldier—that is, armed man.

‡ The Student's Cabinet Library of Useful Tracts. No. II.—Hitchcock on the Connexion between Geology and Natural Religion. Edinburgh; Thomas Clark,

* The neutral character of our ground, and the pledge given in our prospectus not in any way to meddle with religion, party, or politics—and which our readers must acknowledge we have heretofore religiously observed—having prevented our noticing many publications well worthy of attention, or in any way referring to facts and circumstances connected with the early religious history of our country, it is our intention, if spared health and strength, to commence, in the course of a month or two, another little publication, to be entitled "The Religious and Literary Penny Magazine." To those friends who may have expected its earlier appearance, we beg to say, that a rather severe illness has hitherto prevented us from completing our arrangements for its publication.

"These facts teach us that the same admirable adaptation of the different parts and processes of nature, which we observe in the present creation, has always been prominent in every previous condition of the globe, indicating the untiring and ceaseless exercise of the same infinite wisdom in all ages. We see, secondly, in these facts, evidence that the plans of the Deity have always been devised with such admirable skill, that from apparent evil real good is always produced in the end. At first view we cannot but regard the tremendous revolutions which the earth appears to have undergone with painful emotions, and as evidence either of penal inflictions, or of a defect of contrivance on the part of the Creator. But here we learn that every revolution of this kind is improvement, and that its object was to fit the world for more numerous and perfect beings. This view of the subject changes the penal aspect of these revolutions into displays of benevolence, and defect of skill and contrivance into a demonstration of infinite wisdom.

"Upon the whole, however, geology gives the greatest expansion to our views of the plans of the Deity, by furnishing us with a clue to one of the grand conservative and controlling principles of the universe. But two of these principles have yet been discovered. Newton developed the great mechanical power by which the universe is sustained, when he unfolded and demonstrated his theory of gravitation. The other, the chemical power—the second right hand of the Creator—it was reserved for geology to bring to light. A third, perhaps, the electrical power, may yet be disclosed by some future Newton. Gravitation binds the universe together, and controls the movements of its larger masses. But were no chemistry at work in these masses, to transmute their elements into successive forms of beauty and life, it would be literally the bands of death which gravity would impose. But chemistry is at work unceasingly through all the dominions of nature, and perpetual change is the result. This perpetual change is the great conservative and controlling principle to which we referred. On the surface of the globe, and especially among animals and plants, this constant change, this perpetual increase and diminution, renovation and destruction, have always been most obvious; and it is usually regarded as a defect or penal infliction, rather than a wise and universal law of nature. Especially does diminution and decay affect us with painful emotions. And we would not deny that such may be the circumstances under which these changes occur, as to make them real penal inflictions. Indeed, natural theology cannot but regard in this light the diseases and dissolution to which man is subject. Still geology in connexion with astronomy shows us that perpetual change of form and condition is a universal law of nature; that it is not limited to the organized creation, but extends an equal dominion over suns and planets.

"We see it, in the first place, in the geological history of our globe. There is an increasing agency at work all around us to wear down the mountains, and to fill up the valleys; and we see the evidence of powerful diluvial action in comparatively modern times, in the accumulation of detritus, and in the grooves and furrows which the surfaces of rocks exhibit. As we descend into the solid strata, we meet with perpetual proof, in the chemical and mechanical characters of the rocks, and in their organic remains, that a multitude of changes have been going on during their deposition: or rather that there has been unceasing change.

"At this point geology connects itself with astronomy: and the two sciences are made to reflect mutual light upon each other. Astronomy discloses to us certain facts in respect to other worlds, that lead the geologist strongly to suspect, that they too are undergoing those changes and that progressive improvement which the earth has experienced. The comets appear to be in the very earliest stages of these transmutations. They appear to be even in a gaseous condition, through excessive internal heat; and are not yet brought into such a state that any animal or vegetable natures with which we are acquainted could inhabit them; though the remarkable history of the extinct organized beings of our own globe, should lead us not to be very confident on this point. To become the fit residence of such natures as ours, by the operation of natural laws, will surely require periods of almost incalculable length. Still further removed from the condition of our globe appears to be that of the nebulæ; consisting apparently of the materials out of which comets might be formed; though here, too, uncertain conjecture is our only guide. But the point which we wish to be borne in mind is, that these bodies, as well as the comets, seem to be in a condition analogous to what the records of geology lead us to conjecture might have been the state of our globe at some period of the immense past. The moon, we may reasonably conjecture, seems to be so far redeemed from the excessive violence of volcanic agency, as to be adapted, perhaps, to the natures of some organized beings; though it is doubtful whether that globe has such an element as water, or any atmosphere, upon its surface. This fact, however, by no means militates against the idea that it may contain living beings. For to infer that water and air are essential to all organized existence, because such is the case on this globe, would be the conclusion of a narrow-minded philosophy. Jupiter, on the other hand, it would seem, may be covered as yet with one shoreless ocean; and there perhaps such leviathans may now be playing as once sported in the earlier seas of our globe.

"Such are the motions and orbits of the asteroids of the solar system, that ingenious men have been led to conjecture that they once constituted a single planet between Mars and Jupiter, which was burst asunder by some internal force. And if such a process of refrigeration has taken place in other planets as in our own, might we not admit, that, under possible circumstances, such a terrific disruption might have taken place? and that, too, in exact accordance with the most wise and benevolent plans of the Deity?

"Those solid meteors that sometimes fall to the earth appear to have been in a state of fusion; and, indeed, they are usually intensely heated when they descend. May we not regard these facts, too, as perfectly consonant with the idea that all the bodies of the universe are undergoing important changes by powerful agents, not the least of which is heat?

"Is it not most natural and philosophical to regard the sun as an immense globe of heated matter, constantly radiating heat into space, and therefore gradually cooling? And what are the spots on its surface, but the incipient crust? And what is the zodiacal light, but elastic vapours, driven by heat from the sun's surface, and made to assume an oblate and almost lenticular form?

"Shall we regard those fixed stars that have in past ages disappeared from the heavens, and those which now shine only periodically, as evidence of disorder and ruin among the works of God? Rather let the analogies at which we have hinted lead us to view them as worlds in particular stages of those mighty changes to which we have reason to believe the universe is subject, and without which all would be stagnation and death.

"We acknowledge that these astronomical facts afford us but faint glimpses of the geology of other worlds. Nevertheless, they seem to us to lead the mind that is conversant with the geological history of our globe irresistibly to the conclusions, that similar causes are in operation, and similar changes are in progress, in other worlds; and that perpetual change is not an anomaly peculiar to our planet, but the very essence of a vast system embracing the wide universe.

"Faint as is the light that is yet thrown upon this subject, yet what an immense field for contemplation does it disclose to our view! And how do the plans of the Infinite Mind enlarge and ramify as we gaze upon them until we see them connecting past eternity with that which is to come; the two extremities being lost in the dimness of distance! God is here exhibited to us as employing the same matter, under successive forms, for a great variety of different purposes; all, however, connected into one vast system; and all bearing upon the happiness of animated natures?"

THE STARS INHABITED.

Astronomy, both by its practical discoveries and well-founded theories, has opened much to our view altogether unknown to the ancients. It has, as it were, withdrawn the veil which formerly shaded the laws, motions, and magnitude of the universe. It has shown us the shape and extent of the earth; the velocity with which it travels; with its two-fold motions, and the laws of the changes of the seasons, and the night and day. It gives us the power of measuring the immense distances of the planets and the sun—the amazing size of the latter, and the great velocity of the former. It shows us millions of moving bodies placed at immeasurable distances, and thus enables us to form a faint idea of the Almighty Power which has formed such a vast and extraordinary system. But still the mind of man seeks more knowledge than even this wonderful science affords him. The human soul would stretch itself even beyond the boundless limits of time and space. Bursting the prison of its earthly frame, the immortal spirit looks beyond the confines of its habitation, and, from the knowledge adequate to its nature, *cries out for still more extended information*, even on subjects which, in its present state, it is not capable of understanding.

When we view the firmament above us, and consider the innumerable stars that are visible even to the naked eye, and remember that the sun is the centre of our system, with eleven planets revolving round it, of which our earth is one—that it is larger than some, and smaller than others—we then begin to think, May not the other planets be inhabited like our world, with beasts and creeping things, vegetables and trees? May they not, too, have their *intellectual beings, endued with immortal souls* as we ourselves are? And we are forced to the conviction that *such must be the case; for what is a world without* its intelligent inhabitants, or how else could it glorify its Creator? Whether all their senses and properties are the same as ours, matters not in this consideration—their atmospheres are different, and therefore there must be a difference in the beings that inhabit them. But what are these few planets? what space is contained within their orbits?—trifling in comparison to the immeasurable distance that even *man* can imagine to exist between him and the most remote of the fixed stars that we can see—*nothing in comparison* to the boundless infinity which we can hardly conceive. Then let us look beyond the orbits *of our brother worlds*, and what do we behold? As many suns as there are particles of sand on the sea-shore. We *must* believe them suns—their light is their own, otherwise their distance would render them invisible to us—they *must* have planets revolving round them, otherwise they are useless, and shed forth their lustre on empty nothingness. Then how multiplied must be the worlds under heaven! If every star we see has even as many worlds round it as our sun, invisible from their distances, what then is our earth?—a little speck of matter—a star to the few planets of our luminary—nothing to the worlds of other suns. And what is man?—a little insect crawling on the surface of that speck, and amused with the various trifles that surround him. But he is more—he has that within him which will leave its tabernacle of clay, and soar above all worlds—he has a soul confined within the limits of his present nature, which, freed from the cares and troubles that now surround it, if depending on its great Creator, will live in Paradise through all eternity. Nor can we suppose that the few souls which occupy the regions of this world shall be the only inhabitants of the boundless heavens—that the whole creation which is perceptible to our senses was made for our use—that the millions of enlightened bodies, which are visible only through our telescopes, which do not benefit us in the least degree, were created to excite our wonder. Impossible, and still more improbable! for we cannot for a moment imagine that the great Creator of the universe has limited his goodness to the trifling dimensions of this earth, and bounded the creation of intelligent beings to the inhabitants of such a limited sphere as ours.

J——N, A. B.

LINES WRITTEN ON A VIEW OF THE HEAVENS AT NIGHT.

Infinity of space!—mysterious wonder!—
Too great, too big, for human comprehension!—
Man tries in thought to span thee, but he cannot.
Far, far beyond the reach of thought thou dwellest:
I see thee but in part, and yet around
'Tis one unbounded, measureless expanse—
One limitless, interminable view.
Above me is the vast concavity of heaven,
Spreading around its adamantine arch,
Whose azure sweep, enamelled with a thousand stars,
Seems like a sea with isles of living fire.
See how like balls of phosphorus they shine—
How pure and spiritual is their aspect!—
They seem the very eyes of heaven—its ministers of light.
Ye radiant orbs, how vast, how great your distance![*]
And what is Earth amid this mighty scene?—
Earth, that now seems so large and spacious.
'Tis but a round,[†] diminutive, and trembling ball,
That, like the sparkling myriads around,
Wheel on throughout the ample vault of heaven;
For, could we, from some extramundane point,
Behold this mighty globe that we inhabit,
With all its seas, its mountains, and its lakes,
Its gilded domes and lofty pyramids,
Its noble palaces and splendid halls,
And all the other costly works of man,—
'Twould seem but as yon little drop of gold
That glitters in the firmament above.
But nobler still—surpassing comprehension—
Amazing, inconceivably sublime—
Those many orbs that through the empyrean roll
Are but the central sun of other systems;
And millions, yet unseen, are *floating on*
Throughout the azure fields of liquid ether.
Thou mighty, grand, and noble contemplation!
Before thee language fails, description droops—
Imagination only can conceive thee.
Unfurl thy wing, then—let me soar aloft—
Bear, bear me onward to yon twinkling star
That trembles on the horizon's utmost verge!
I see—I see another world—a new horizon now—
Another paradrome, which worlds still circuit through—
Another glittering escutcheon, decked
With heaven's armorial bearings.
Surpassing, transcendental greatness!
And where that mighty Power that framed them all—
That vast Omnipotent that ranged them
Each in their respective orbits, that thus they wheel
Through endless ages, still maintaining order?
Away, he dwells in fathomless immensity—
"Afar from mortal eye, or angels' purer ken."
Learn, then, oh man! from this thy littleness—
This lesson ought to teach humility;
For what art thou amid the vast creation?
Thy world is but a fraction of the whole,
And thou thyself an atom placed upon it. W.

---

[*] Every little star, though so little in appearance, is really a vast globe like the sun in size and glory. The reason that they appear so diminutive, is owing to their immense and inconceivable distance—so great, that it is supposed a cannon-ball, flying with unabated rapidity, would take seven hundred thousand years *before it could* reach the nearest of them.

[†] A learned writer remarks, that the loftiest summits of hills, and the greatest ridges of mountains, are no real objection to the globular form of the earth, because they bear no greater proportion to the entire surface of the terraqueous ball than a particle of dust casually dropped on a mathematician's globe bears to its whole circumference; consequently the rotund figure is no more destroyed in the former case than in the latter.